

KITCHEN AFFAIRS

for the serious cook

WOODLAND CENTER
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PORK CHOPS with BLUEBERRIES

(Serves 4)

4 each pork chops, cut 1-inch thick with bone on
2 TaBleSPoons minced fresh thyme leaves
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
6 to 8 grinds fresh black pepper
1 teaspoon olive oil
2 TaBleSPoons unsalted butter
1/2 cup chicken stock or broth
3/4 cup Ruby Port or Merlot
1/2 cup blueberry jelly or preserves
1/2 cup fresh blueberries (or frozen-IQF and defrosted)

Preheat an oven to 400°F.

Grind the thyme with the salt and pepper in a spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle. Add the olive oil and blend to form a paste. Rub the pork chops with this mixture, using about 3/4s of the mixture. Reserve the other quarter of the mixture for the sauce.

Let the chops rest at room temperature for 30 to 45 minutes, or refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours. If refrigerated, let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes before cooking.

Melt the butter in a large heavy skillet over medium heat, until it just begins to brown. Add the pork chops and cook them until well-browned on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the chops to an oven-safe baking dish and roast them until done, about 10 minutes more. Test with an instant read thermometer; the internal temperature of the chops, away from bone, should be about 145°F. Let them stand at room temperature 5 to 7 minutes before serving.

Over high heat, add the chicken broth and the wine to the skillet you used for the chops and scrape the skillet surface to de-glaze the pan. (The browned bits of pork will add flavor to your sauce.) Add the remaining thyme mixture and boil the liquid until it's reduced to about 3/4 cup, 5 to 10 minutes. Add the blueberry preserves and bring the sauce back to the boil.

Reduce heat to medium and simmer until the sauce is thickened and reduced again to about 3/4 cup, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the fresh blueberries and heat them through, about a minute. Taste and re-season the sauce with salt and pepper, if needed.

Plate the chops and spoon the sauce over each one. Serve at once.